

S.208

Introduced by Senators Hashim, Baruth, Ram Hinsdale, Bongartz, Chittenden,
Gulick, Hardy, Harrison, Lyons, Perchlik, Vyhovsky, Watson
and White

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Internal security and public safety; Vermont Criminal Justice Council;
general provisions; standards for law enforcement identification

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require
standards for law enforcement to identify themselves. Specifically, this bill
proposes that all local, state, and federal law enforcement officers clearly
identify themselves by name or badge number. Additionally, this bill proposes
to prohibit masks or personal disguises with certain exceptions for potentially
hazardous situations and deployments.

An act relating to standards for law enforcement identification

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 20 V.S.A. § 2373 is added to read:

§ 2373. STANDARDS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT IDENTIFICATION

(a) Legislative intent. It is the intent of the General Assembly to exercise
the power granted to Vermont by the 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

1 to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its residents and law enforcement
2 officers present in the State by codifying standards for law enforcement
3 identification.

4 (b) Definitions. As used in this section:

5 (1) "Law enforcement agency" has the same meaning as in section
6 2351a of this title.

7 (2) "Law enforcement officer" has the same meaning as in section
8 2351a of this title and includes any officer of a federal law enforcement agency
9 or any person acting on behalf of a local, state, or federal law enforcement
10 agency.

11 (c) Identification requirements.

12 (1) A law enforcement officer shall be clearly identified by the officer's
13 name or badge number, or both, on the officer's uniform.

14 (2) A law enforcement officer shall not wear any mask or personal
15 disguise while interacting with the public in the performance of the officer's
16 duties.

17 (3) Notwithstanding subdivision (2) of this subsection, a law
18 enforcement officer may wear:

19 (A) a medical grade mask that is surgical;

20 (B) an N95 respirator designed to prevent the transmission of
21 airborne diseases;

1 (C) a mask designed to protect against exposure to smoke during a
2 fire-involved situation;

3 (D) a mask necessary to perform duties during a water rescue
4 operation;

5 (E) a mask related to protection against exposure to biological or
6 chemical agents during an incident where these agents may be present; or

7 (F) a mask designed to protect against exposure to cold during a
8 declared weather emergency.

9 (4) Notwithstanding subdivision (2) of this subsection, the following is
10 permitted:

11 (A) Tactical Services Unit (TSU) team officers may use gear
12 necessary to protect their faces from physical harm while performing TSU
13 responsibilities.

14 (B) Law enforcement officers who participate in active undercover
15 drug-related operations or assignments may use a personal disguise when
16 necessary to perform such operations or assignments.

17 (d) Penalty. A law enforcement officer who violates subsection (c) of this
18 section shall be fined not more than \$1,000.00 or lose the officer's professional
19 licensure or certification, if applicable, or both.

20 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

21 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.